

# What is our Purpose?

## Vision

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) envisions a cohesive community of deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind and speech disabled persons empowered to enjoy society's benefits and opportunities without communication barriers.

## Mission

The mission of ODHH is to improve quality of life for all people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind and speech disabled by ensuring equal communication access and strengthening awareness and service collaboration between DSHS agencies, nonprofits, businesses and the communities.

## Guiding Principles and Core Values

- Equal Access
- Communication Choices
- Self-Actualization
- Transparency
- Civic Participation
- Diversity Appreciation

## How to contact ODHH



Office of the Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing  
PO Box 45301  
Olympia, WA 98504-5301

**(800) 422-7930** Voice/TTY

**(360) 902-8000** Voice/TTY

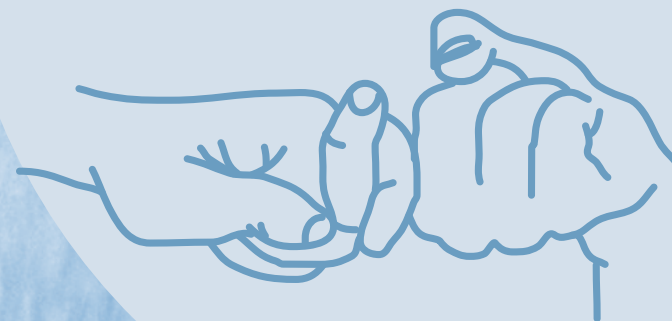
**(360) 902-0855** Fax

<http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>  
[www.washingtonrelay.com](http://www.washingtonrelay.com)  
[odhh@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:odhh@dshs.wa.gov)

*Videophone*  
D-Link IP address: 209.181.249  
D-Link VP# (360) 902-8000



## Office of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing



**ODHH** Office of the Deaf  
& Hard of Hearing

## What are our Concerns?

The general public does not fully understand hearing loss and the unique needs of people with hearing loss.

This lack of understanding creates communication barriers which can occur in all aspects of daily life, including:

- Education
- Employment
- Medical/Mental Health
- Courts/Legal
- Business
- Government

Federal laws designed to remove these barriers through the use of reasonable accommodations include:

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Some reasonable accommodations to help bridge the communication gap are:

- Technology
- Interpreters
- Captioning



## Who do we serve?

Approximately 506,000 individuals with a hearing loss live in the State of Washington. Of those, 12,600 individuals are profoundly deaf. In addition, Washington is ranked with the second largest deafblind population in the nation.

Hearing loss affects people from all walks of life, from infants to the elderly, and across communities with no regard to socio-economic status, religious affiliation or ethnic background.

The various communities of people with hearing loss who interact with hearing people and use unique means of communication include:

- Deaf
- Hard of Hearing
- Deafblind
- Late Deafened
- Families
- Professional
- General Public

ODHH also meets a specialized need for people with speech disabilities facing telecommunication barriers.

## What do we offer?

**Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS)** Relay operator services allows people with hearing loss to communicate effectively with others who do not have specialized telephone equipment, in a way similar to what a person with normal hearing and clear speech communicates with the telephone.

**Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED)** Specialized telephone equipment is available to eligible clients. Contracted trainers provide client training on how to use the equipment.

**Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM)** A statewide contract for interpreter services is available so that individuals using sign language can communicate with staff of government and service providers.

**Assistive Communication Technology (ACT)** A referral/loan system to provide assistive listening device systems, real-time captioning and other assistive technology.

**Communication Access Network (CAN)** Videoconferencing sites throughout Washington provide access to video relay services (VRS), video remote interpreting (VRI), video remote captioning (VRC) and face-to-face interpersonal communication (P2P).

**Social & Human Services (SHS)** Non-profit Regional Service Centers on Deaf and Hard of Hearing are contracted to provide an array of social and human services throughout Washington, including case management and advocacy services.

**Information, Referral & Advocacy (IRA)** Provides information, resources and referrals to the general public and communities. Advocates on behalf of individuals needing accessible communication to state government.

**Outreach & Training (OT)** Outreach activities increase awareness about diversity and culture. Training activities provide knowledge and skills to effectively serve people with hearing loss through the provision of reasonable accommodations.